

**Friis, John**

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**From:** Michael Weinberg [mweinberg2007@att.net]

**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2009 5:51 PM

**To:** Friis, John

**Subject:** BCBA benefits in CT educational settings

To Whom it May concern;

I am writing on behalf of the Association for Behavior Analysis International's Practice Board, for which I am chair of the licensure committee. I am writing in support of the bill under consideration for making the BCBA a required service provider for students with autism spectrum disorders in public schools in the state of Connecticut. We have seen the field become a recognized discipline in the past 15 years, with continued studies published in peer-reviewed journals that show the benefits of applied behavior analysis for these students. A recent study published in the Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities earlier this year reviews early behavioral intervention studies going back to the seminal study by Lovaas et. al. from 1987 in which a large proportion of those students in his experimental group on the autism spectrum were "cured" of autism (his words) as a result of intensive applied behavior analysis services. The studies reviewed over the subsequent 20 years also support this conclusion and a recent report by managed care leaders, and other mental health and behavioral health leaders around the country, known as the "Garber Report" has concluded that applied behavior analysis is the most beneficial approach for children on the autism spectrum, and is based upon published research on the science and practice of applied behavior analysis.

Having said this, the next aspect is to support the idea that if these methods are to be used with children on the autism spectrum, then it should be implemented by those with the appropriate training and qualifications, and who must adhere to a set of ethical guidelines of professional practice as applied behavior analysts. At this time, this is the standard credential in the United States with many states now requiring this credential to provide services to children in public schools, and adults on the autism spectrum, with Pennsylvania being among those states requiring this credential for at least oversight or consultation for behavior analytic services.

I also can speak to the involvement of BCBAs in the Connecticut Birth-to-Three program and have personally seen many gains in these very young children identified with autism spectrum disorders as a result of applied behavior analysis services provided or overseen by a BCBA, which requires a minimum of a Master's Degree plus approved coursework, supervised experience, and passing a certification examination to achieve the certification. In my case, my BCBA is based upon my doctoral degree, which has afforded me the added credential of "BCBA-D" with the D representing the Doctoral Degree.

In addition, St. Joseph's College in Hartford now has an approved BCBA program in place, the first of its kind that I am aware of within the state of Connecticut, plus there are a number of online course options available for students to complete these courses which is a 5 course sequence in applied behavior analysis.

As these courses are more available, and there is a requirement for such services by an appropriately qualified professional, the numbers of BCBAs will increase, and there is very likely to be adequate numbers of certificants to fill supervisory or consultative positions in the schools in a reasonable period of time.

I would be pleased to answer any additional questions you may have.

Thank you for considering this bill.

Sincerely,

Michael Weinberg, Ph.D., LP, BCBA-D  
Association for Behavior Analysis International Practice Board,  
Chair, Licensure Committee  
Tel: 860-315-0565 (Mobile)  
860-315-7115 (Home)

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